Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4510th meeting

Tuesday, 9 April 2002, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zínser
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question

Letter dated 6 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/359)

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02-32115 (E)

The meeting resumed at 10.45 a.m.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Thayeb (Indonesia), Mr. Sharma (Nepal) and Mr. Manalo (Philippines) took the seats reserve ' for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Algeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I would like, at the outset, Sir, to express my delegation's great satisfaction at seeing you presiding over the Security Council, and to express the confidence and hope that my delegation places in your effective and wise leadership of its work in the month of April, when the Council is facing so many challenges and when peoples subjugated to foreign occupation are appealing to it to render justice and ensure the triumph of the rule of law.

Our gratitude goes also to the representative of Norway, whose leadership was needed until the very last moments of his presidency because of scorching and pressing events. Those events then forced the Council, just three days after it had demanded Israel's immediate withdrawal from the Palestinian territories it had invaded, to meet again to consider the further deterioration of a situation that cast into a horrendous situation hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians delivered up to an arbitrary army of aggression that ignores the most basic norms of international humanitarian law and that seems to have established brutality as a code of conduct.

Indeed, it is as if the adoption of the Council's resolution had freed that army from all constraints: deaf to the Council's demands, it applied itself with even greater fury to invading the remaining Palestinian enclaves — most recently the Dura area, on Monday night and into Tuesday, slaughtering dozens of unarmed civilians who had nothing but their bare chests to oppose it, destroying houses and infrastructure, attacking the most sacred Islamic and Christian sites and opening fire without hesitation even on the Church of the Nativity.

In intolerable defiance of to the Council, the Sharon Government, has, in effect, interpreted Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), unanimously adopted, as authorizing it to complete its terror campaign and not to begin the withdrawal of its forces until all its objectives have been achieved. Everything seems to have been conceived, planned and organized with that in mind, and so that it could continue its operations without a care in the world.

The Israeli leadership is demonstrating such arrogance and is indeed humiliating the Security Council, whose authority is now being openly challenged. The Council must therefore respond and must react firmly and with the necessary resolve to this unacceptable attack on its credibility.

What tremendous courage is being displayed by an Israel army drunk with power and with the military superiority that is crushing an unarmed people under the weight of bombs. But its brutal force will never break that people's spirit or erode its faith in the justice of its sacred cause.

It is so hypocritical, following suicide attacks on which the Palestinian Authority has unambiguously spoken out, scornfully to equate them with the exemplary and heroic resistance of a people whose children, whose childhood has been stolen, have been reduced to fighting the most powerful army of occupation in the world by throwing stones with a courage that defies the imagination.

Rather, is it not the policy of systematic terrorism, of blind violence against unarmed civilians and even against the sick and the wounded and of savage destruction of homes, schools and hospitals that deserves to be called terrorism?

Where, then, is the sacred right of peoples to struggle against the occupier, which has been legitimized and immortalized by the heroic epics of patriots, freedom fighters and resistance fighters who live in the collective psyche of American, African,

Asian and European peoples? Or are we to understand that a double standard is in operation here? Is there now good resistance and bad resistance — good terrorists and bad terrorists?

Today, the Security Council is called on to act with a heightened sense of urgency. It cannot allow its authority to be flouted, and its credibility diminished in this manner. It cannot remain passive at a time when unspeakable tragedy is unfolding in full view. It must not allow the forces of evil, deaf to its injunctions and indifferent to its appeals, to pursue, methodically and with impunity, their destruction of Palestinian cities, burying the last hopes raised by the Beirut peace initiative. The credibility of the Council is at stake — as is the entire system of collective security, of which the Council is the pillar and cornerstone.

Before the Middle East definitively collapses into irreparable horror, the Council must rise to its responsibilities under the Charter, and bring Israel to compliance and compel it to abide by international law by fully, effectively and immediately withdrawing its forces and strictly respecting the standards of international humanitarian law, in particular the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and lifting the restrictions imposed on President Arafat. It must ensure protection for the millions of Palestinians who are exposed to the murderous folly of the Israeli forces of aggression and substitute the momentum of peace for the logic of war. That is the only way of protecting that extremely sensitive region of the world from catastrophe and the disastrous consequences for all of Israeli irredentism.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative Algeria for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Iraq. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Kadhe (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express the gratitude and appreciation of my delegation to you, Mr. President, for having convened yet another emergency meeting of the Security Council at the request of the Arab Group.

The Council is meeting for the third time in less than 10 days to consider criminal acts perpetrated by the Zionist entity against the people of Palestine. The Council has adopted two resolutions calling on the Zionist entity to halt its military campaigns. That entity, however, continues its brutal terrorist campaign against the Palestinians. It persists in killing and displacing them, destroying their homes, laying siege to their holy sites and using starvation as means of war.

It continues to besiege the headquarters of President Yasser Arafat and to bring military pressure to bear upon him with a view to killing him and his companions. In brief, the Zionist entity is committing acts of genocide and crimes against humanity.

As members know very well, under international law, any of the following acts constitute genocide: killing members of a group; causing serious bodily harm to members of a group; or deliberately inflicting on a group living conditions calculated to bring about, in whole or in part, its physical destruction. Crimes against humanity are defined as follows: the deliberate killing, annihilation, expulsion, forced transfer or detention of people, or severely depriving them of their liberty or freedom of movement, all of which run counter to the basic rules of international law.

The Zionist entity has committed all of those crimes. The Council is therefore called upon to act immediately, under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and to adopt coercive measures against that entity. Failure to do so would mean that the Council is unable to maintain international peace and security in accordance with its Charter mandate. Should that happen, the very raison d'être of the United Nations would be called into question.

The crimes perpetrated by the Zionist entity against the Palestinian people are covered by the provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Should it prove legally impossible to apply that Statute, the Security Council should consider the establishment of an ad hoc international criminal tribunal to prosecute the Zionist entity's criminals. Sharon and the military Chief of Staff, Mofaz, would be at the top of that list as a result of the war crimes and crimes against humanity they have committed in their brutal campaign in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Under common article 1 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, all States undertake to respect and to ensure respect for those Conventions. Member States, collectively and individually, are thus committed under international humanitarian law to adopt legal, diplomatic and coercive measures to bring

pressure to bear on the Zionist entity to respect those Conventions. Furthermore, those States are also duty-bound, under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which is part of customary international law, to shoulder their responsibility in defence of the Palestinian people.

Our respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and for international law prompts us to call on the Council to abide by its responsibilities under the Charter. The Zionist entity, however, has not respected Council resolutions, and the Council has been unable to ensure respect for the provisions of those resolutions. That has encouraged the Zionist entity to continue to violate all the rules of international law. We believe that the situation in Palestine will not improve as long as the British and United States Administrations continue their assistance to and support for the Zionist entity. That support is an attempt to crush the morale of the Palestinian people and to break the will of the Arabs, so that they will be forced to surrender to the Zionist-American alliance.

It is really unreasonable that compliance by the Zionist entity with international legitimacy is outside the abilities of the United States and Great Britain. While rallying support for this entity, and under these circumstances, the two Administrations once again raised the issue of the threat of striking at Iraq. The objective behind this has become well known; it is an attempt to divert the world's attention from condemning the crimes of the Zionist entity against the Palestinian people. It is also an attempt to terrorize States so that they will not shoulder their international commitments in respecting, and guaranteeing respect for, the rules of international law.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of Morocco. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Bennouna (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, the Moroccan delegation is pleased to see you presiding over the Council for the month of April. All those who have frequented the United Nations know of your great experience in this house, and they are also aware of your personal commitment to peace. That is why, in these tragic times in the Middle East, we could not hope for a better President in the Security Council.

The day before yesterday, hundreds of thousands of Moroccans, coming to Rabat from all parts of the Kingdom, bore witness to their pain. These hundreds of thousands of Moroccans showed their pain with their hearts; they shared with Palestinians their tears and their sorrow. No human being could fail to share such suffering on seeing all these small children holding each other's hands, lost in the streets in Nablus or Bethlehem, taking home just enough food, in the midst of Israeli soldiers and of the roar of bombs coming from everywhere from the occupier's artillery.

Old people are hiding, cringing under the tables in the age-old casbahs. Human beings, monuments and religious symbols have been martyrized, violated, pillaged. The Palestinian resistance who die while going to recover the bodies of their compatriots, all the houses which have been burned, along with their inhabitants – all these images, and many others, have gone around the world, and they have deeply distressed the conscience of all. They have reminded the people of the world of the scenes and the tragedies we thought were gone forever.

These images give us pause, all of us — citizens, diplomats, officials, whatever our beliefs and our convictions. They would have startled the founders of the United Nations, those who drafted the Charter, and all of those who have joined the United Nations since and who have all declared themselves resolved to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, reaffirming their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equality of rights of men and women, and of nations large and small. Of course I am referring here to the Preamble of the Charter.

Heedless of all that, Mr. Ariel Sharon continues his war. He has even stated that he found himself at the point of no return and that he would not go back to the situation which prevailed before operations were launched. One could not be any more clear. The Israeli Prime Minister has chosen to defy the whole world — the Security Council, its permanent members and international public opinion. Thus far he has turned a deaf ear to all the Council's appeals and to your last statement, Mr. President, the one made during the weekend, and also to those of the major world leaders and, finally, to the appeal made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who still represents the legitimacy of the international community — Mr. Kofi Annan.

For Mr. Sharon, the Israeli army will withdraw only when it has accomplished its mission. Does this mean that it will continue this mission, making a mockery of all humanitarian law and of the existence of thousands of civilians, whom it is terrorizing daily, in full view of everyone? How can the Security Council accept that without questioning its own authority?

The Arab world held out the hand of peace in Beirut. Israel would be wrong in seeing in that nothing but an expression of weakness. It would be a serious mistake; it would be short-sightedness that might have tragic consequences. To continue to escalate repression and violence, with such disproportionate resources, is to commit the irreparable and to gravely jeopardize the future.

The Arabs want peace. They are prepared to live with the Israeli State. They have no disputes, historic or otherwise, with the Jews. They have shared tradition, culture and language with Jews for centuries. This peace, this hand which has been held out, must now be taken. Peace must begin with a forthright and worthy dialogue with Yasser Arafat, the legitimate leader of the Palestinian Authority.

Only yesterday, the King of Morocco, His Majesty King Mohammed VI, President of the Al-Quds Committee, was able to speak by telephone with President Arafat. He reminded the President of the support of the King of Morocco and of the Moroccan Government and people in the ordeal it has endured since the Israeli invasion.

It is indecent to isolate Yasser Arafat; it is indecent to threaten him illegally with deportation and then blame him for doing nothing to put an end to the hostilities. I should like someone to explain to me how one can isolate the head of the Palestinian resistance and then ask him to intervene to stop the hostilities. Yasser Arafat is the legitimate representative of his people, and confirm this, day after day. They die to testify to that. They proclaim it every day, risking their very lives. It is with Yasser Arafat that Mr. Sharon must begin a dialogue by forgetting old scores to be settled and the vicissitudes of other confrontations that are 20 years old. When one exercises the responsibility of head of State, one does not settle personal scores.

Throughout his life, Yasser Arafat has claimed nothing less than justice for his people. Today as yesterday, he has been met with force and repression. As the philosopher Blaise Pascal stressed, "Justice without force is powerless; force without justice is tyrannical". The exactions committed by the Israeli army are doing grave harm to the very values that Israel claims. When there is no justice, nothing remains but arbitrariness and tyranny. That is why, today, people are rising up to demand that the international community dispatch an interposition force to protect the defenceless Palestinian people and provide them with justice.

As we well know, we attach the same value to any human life, no matter whose it is. We condemn all acts against innocent civilians, whatever their provenance. Today, we pray that, at the end of the road, Palestinians and Israelis will live in peace with mutual respect.

The mission to the region begun yesterday by United States Secretary of State Mr. Powell, beginning with my country, is a first, tangible sign of hope for peace. Our most earnest desire is that Mr. Powell's efforts, through his contacts and the strength of his conviction, will succeed as soon as possible. The region awaits Mr. Powell with impatience. However, the fact remains that today, the Security Council itself is also in a position to give its support to the success of Mr. Powell's mission, by using all juridical means at its disposal — and the Council knows that it does have juridical means under the Charter — to require that Israel implement all Council resolutions, lift the siege imposed on Yasser Arafat, immediately end the bloodbath and withdraw from Palestinian cities that it is occupying illegally. Each day that passes brings new tragedy. We must act as swiftly as possible, because — to paraphrase the poet Saint-John Perse — inertia alone is a threat.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Morocco for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Spain, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Flores (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the EU — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association

countries belonging to the European Economic Area, Iceland and Liechtenstein, align themselves with this statement.

In the past weeks, the EU has condemned in the strongest terms the relentless cycle of terror and violence that is afflicting the Israelis and the Palestinians. Today, we want to reiterate this message and to express our utmost concern at the continuing military operations in the Palestinian territories, the violations of international humanitarian law, and the increasing and alarming number of casualties among the civilian population.

The attempts to destroy the Palestinian Authority and its infrastructure, the isolation of Chairman Arafat, and the humiliation and confinement of the Palestinian civilian population are unacceptable and contrary to international law. Those actions and the disproportionate use of force must cease immediately. They are unjustified and do not serve Israel's legitimate fight against terrorism.

Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) must be implemented immediately. We deeply regret that they continue to be ignored, in particular the demands for an immediate cessation of violence, a meaningful and effective ceasefire and the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities and other areas under the control of the Palestinian Authority.

The lockdowns and restrictions on movement must end. There must also be an immediate end to President Arafat's isolation and lack of freedom of movement. The Palestinian Authority and its President, the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people, must make every possible effort to stop the violence, dismantle all terrorist organizations such as Hamas and the Islamic Jihad and guarantee that those responsible for the most recent brutal terrorist attacks against Israelis do not go unpunished.

The EU is extremely concerned by the humanitarian disaster affecting the Palestinian population. In particular, we are concerned about news concerning the gravity of the humanitarian situation in Jenin and Nablus. We reiterate that actions against medical and humanitarian institutions and personnel are absolutely unacceptable and contrary to United Nations Conventions relating to the protection of civilians in armed conflict and to international humanitarian law. They must be able fully to perform their work and given full access to populations in need. We recall that both parties must respect international humanitarian standards and protect the lives of civilians.

The European Union stresses the importance of the vision contained in President Bush's statement on Thursday and in that regard welcomes the mission of Secretary of State Powell to the region in order to work with the parties to implement Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1402 (2002). The creation of a politically and economically viable Palestinian State, security guarantees for the State of Israel and the support recently offered by the League of Arab States for Crown Prince Abdullah's peace initiative are among the elements included in that vision that the European Union has long called for and strongly supports.

We urge both parties to cooperate fully with Secretary Powell, as well as with Special Envoy Zinni and others, to implement the Tenet work plan and the Mitchell report recommendations with the aim of resuming negotiations on a political settlement. We also urge the parties to accept an impartial monitoring mechanism. We are convinced that deploying observers on the ground will serve the interests of both parties. We stand ready to participate in such a mechanism.

The European Union continues to make every effort with the parties, the countries of the region, the United States, the United Nations and Russia to end a conflict that can have only a political solution. We look forward to the meeting of the "quartet" at the ministerial level, with the presence of the Secretary-General, scheduled to take place in Madrid tomorrow.

The special meeting of the ministers of the European Union on 3 April decided to send a high-level mission to the region to meet with Prime Minister Sharon, President Arafat and other relevant personalities on both sides. We regret that the Israeli Government refused to allow the European Union to meet Mr. Arafat, the elected President of the Palestinian Authority. It is essential that the "quartet" of special envoys be given full access to all parties. It is also imperative that diplomatic and consular representatives be able fully to perform their tasks, in particular as regards access to and protection of their own citizens in the territories.

To conclude, the European Union is extremely concerned at the volatile situation in the region and in

particular at the recent escalation of violence along the border between Lebanon and Israel. We call for an end to the violations of the Blue Line, condemn the recent attacks originating in Lebanese territory and call on all parties involved to show the utmost restraint.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Duval (Canada) (*spoke in French*): It is always an honour to speak before the Security Council, especially under your presidency, Sir, which benefits by your great experience.

We are discussing today an issue that has been on the Council's agenda for more than 35 years. In this tragic moment, I hope that the Council, its permanent members and the international community will bear in mind these very wise words of Jean François Paul de Gondi Cardinal de Retz:

> "To enact a law and not enforce it is to authorize that which we would prohibit."

Canada is deeply troubled by the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East. The Council has charted the way forward in resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). The elements of those resolutions are not conditional and there can be no justification for continuing to disregard them. Their immediate implementation has been called for in all quarters and can be deferred no longer. This is not only a political requirement; it is a humanitarian imperative.

As the situation continues to deteriorate, the rising toll of casualties and the deplorable humanitarian conditions of the Palestinians require the immediate implementation of all relevant resolutions. We call on Israel not only to respect the requirements of those resolutions, but also to facilitate the access of humanitarian workers and the delivery of humanitarian aid to those in need and to ensure that the Palestinian people have full and unhindered access to basic needs, including food, water and medical supplies. Canada is deeply concerned by reports detailing incidents in which clearly marked ambulances have been denied access to wounded civilians, delayed at checkpoints or, worse yet, fired upon. Israel should exercise the utmost restraint in order to avoid further civilian casualties. The Palestinian Authority should in turn commit itself to ending all terrorist acts, including suicide bombings that target innocent civilians and are an affront to humankind. Both parties should move immediately to a meaningful ceasefire.

As has been reiterated for many years now, there can be no military solution to this conflict. Continuing on the present course makes a peaceful resolution even harder to reach and risks destabilizing the entire region. The escalating tensions on the Israeli-Lebanese border and the continuing violations of the Blue Line are of serious concern and we call on all parties to demonstrate maximum restraint.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada has consistently affirmed that third-party monitors could serve both parties' interests in assisting with the implementation of a ceasefire agreement. Indeed, Canada recognizes that the urgency of the current situation makes consideration of this matter all the more pressing and we stand ready to assist the cause of peace in any way we can. We urge the parties to take the steps necessary to create an environment in which third-party monitors can play a constructive and consensual role. It is their responsibility.

Canada welcomes the direct engagement of United States Secretary of State Colin Powell, underlines its urgency and urges the parties to give him their full cooperation. We fully support all efforts, including those of the "quartet", aimed at achieving a ceasefire and the implementation of the Tenet plan, accompanied by the prompt resumption of negotiations towards a political solution and the implementation of the Mitchell Committee recommendations. The Security Council can help to establish a locus and a context for the two sides to navigate back from the precipice. We all know and understand the elements upon which a final settlement should be based. Negotiations by the parties aimed at achieving a political solution, and taking account of these elements, should be resumed without delay on the basis of earlier agreements.

In conclusion, it is our hope — if we are permitted any hope — that reports of the withdrawal of the Israel Defence Forces from Qalqiliya and Tulkarem are the beginning of the recognition by Israel of its responsibility under the Council's resolutions.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Canada for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Oman. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Sir, and the Council members for your prompt response to the request made by the Arab Group to hold this meeting in order to consider the deteriorating situation in the occupied Arab territories.

Since the Council adopted resolution 1397 (2002) on 12 March, the Palestinian people have been subjected to a campaign of murder, siege and starvation by the Israeli forces of occupation. Despite the adoption by the Council of three resolutions calling on all concerned parties, particularly Israel, to implement a ceasefire and to withdraw all forces without delay, the demands and appeals have not been heeded. The Israel military machine persists in killing scores of Palestinian civilians, including the elderly, women and children.

Faced with such defiance and Israel's persistent disrespect for the Security Council resolutions, we would like to ask what measures the Council could take that would enable it to implement its resolutions regarding Israel. We would like to associate ourselves with previous speakers who have made it clear that the Council is being put to the test now, more than at any other time in the past. Either the Council proves to the world that it is acting without any double standards by forcing Israel to implement the relevant resolutions, or it remains silent, as has been the case in the past, and deals with Israel as if it were a country above the law and international legitimacy.

Such a situation cannot continue for long. We believe that it is necessary for the Council to act with a degree of responsibility to force Israel to implement relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 1402 (2002), requesting Israel to withdraw its forces from the territories under the control of the Palestinian Authority without delay. That means the immediate implementation of that resolution.

Military options, which impose solutions by force, are not an appropriate means to settle conflicts. The best testimony to that is that, in spite of the incredible pressure that Israel is exerting on the Palestinian people and its courageous leadership to make unreasonable concessions under the threat of force and weapons, that pressure has not broken the will of the Palestinian people or the will of its leadership, since their struggle against the occupation is legitimate and is very soundly grounded in international law.

We believe that a settlement to the conflict in the Middle East cannot be reached unless the parties are convinced of the usefulness of peaceful negotiations. In this regard, we call once again on all countries concerned, countries with influence, and on the Council to urge Israel to heed the call for peace by immediately stopping all acts of violence and withdrawing its forces from all Palestinian towns and villages; to arrange for necessary international protection of the Palestinian people without delay; to restart the peace process and reach a solution to the Middle East conflict through direct negotiations with the legitimate elected leadership of the Palestinian people, represented in the person of President Yasser Arafat and by the Palestinian Authority.

Even if Israel decides to withdraw its forces from Palestinian territories, we would still request that such withdrawal be immediate and from all areas that have been reoccupied. We do not consider this as a prompt response to the will of the international community. Rather, it is a very late response.

The Security Council should not stop at this, as if nothing has happened. We request that the Council consider the adoption of punitive measures against Israel and make it bear responsibility for all the bloodshed and destruction. The Council should also consider the steps necessary to provide protection for the Palestinians, as has already been stated by the representatives of Mauritius and South Africa.

This is the path to peace. Israel must choose between the path of peace, which ensures its right to live in peace, and the path of war, which can only lead to further violence and the killing of innocent people on both sides.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Oman for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Ecuador. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to congratulate the

Security Council on holding this open debate on the serious situation in the Middle East.

The Government of the Republic of Ecuador, deeply concerned over the escalating violence in the Middle East, supports the international community's appeal for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from occupied territories and the immediate cessation of acts of violence on both sides, which, as we know, have caused so many innocent victims, in particular among the civilian population.

Ecuador, convinced that the only way of solving disputes is through peaceful negotiation, expresses its full support for recently adopted Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002).

The Government of Ecuador considers that these resolutions provide the legal and political elements that can bring about the resumption of peace negotiations along the lines provided for in the Tenet plan and the Mitchell recommendations.

In this context, the Government of Ecuador reiterates the appeal for peace made by President Gustavo Noboa in his notes of 5 December 2001 addressed to the Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon, and to the President of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat. In his messages, President Noboa invoked the need to find a peaceful, lasting and equitable solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Ecuador supports the initiatives of the United Nations, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United States towards a negotiated settlement of the conflict. Ecuador especially welcomes the United States Government's dispatch to the region of a delegation at the highest level, led by Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Ecuador recognizes Israel's right to live within secure and recognized borders, according to international law, as well as the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to establish their own State, in accordance with United Nations resolutions.

As a multicultural and multi-ethnic country, Ecuador calls on Israel and Palestine to renounce violence in favour of relations of tolerance and respect for ethnic, cultural and religious diversity. Ecuador expresses special concern at the military operations being carried out at holy sites.

As we did previously in Geneva, on the occasion of the presentation of the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, I wish to affirm emphatically Ecuador's rejection of violations of human rights in the region.

Finally, I wish to express Ecuador's endorsement of statements on this issue by the Rio Group and the Non-Aligned Movement.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Ecuador for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Sudan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Erwa (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Once again in the space of 48 hours, the Council is meeting to consider the very serious and deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. At the outset, I would like to express our support for and agreement with the statement made by Tunisia on behalf of the Arab Group.

The war crimes that Israel, the occupying Power, is currently perpetrating in the occupied Palestinian cities, before the eyes of the entire world, are indeed among the worst crimes of genocide. What is happening now in the Jenin refugee camp — a scene of horrible carnage claiming the lives of hundreds of innocent civilians, including young people, women and children — and the killing of dozens of people in the old city of Nablus and in the vicinity of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem exemplify the continuing practices of oppression by the Israeli occupying forces against innocent civilians. These acts are blatant defiance of Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) and of all the Council's calls for the immediate cessation of acts of aggression and violence and for withdrawal from the Palestinian cities.

Israel's continuing defiance of Security Council resolutions and, more so, its having responded by increasing its aggression and oppression and by perpetrating more massacres against civilians require the Council to act immediately and to condemn Israel for non-compliance with the Council's resolutions. Those acts also require the Council to call upon Israel to respect the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 1949, in the occupied Palestinian territories and to pressure Israel to stop impeding the transfer of the wounded and

the provision of humanitarian and medical assistance to those who need it as a result of Israel's barbaric daily bombings.

The extremely serious situation in the Palestinian territories requires immediate Council action to protect unarmed, innocent civilians in Palestine by deploying an international protection force as soon as possible. Any delay or prevarication in protecting Palestinian civilians would be a failure on the Council's part to assume its responsibilities under the Charter.

We welcome the visit of Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region and the statements made by United States officials, particularly those of President George Bush and Secretary Powell, calling on Israel to withdraw. However, we wish to recall the final communiqué of Arab Foreign Ministers meeting at Cairo on 6 April, which stated that the biased treatment accorded to Israel on the part of some States, particularly the United States, has led Israel to act as if it were above international law and United Nations resolutions. Such privileged treatment has encouraged Israel to pursue its aggressive policies and to threaten peace, security and stability in the region.

By pretending to withdraw from certain areas while simultaneously reoccupying other areas, Israel is playing a trick that fools no one. We are certain that the Council cannot be deceived by such a trick. The carnage of the last 12 days perpetrated daily by the Israeli occupying forces, the savage daily attacks and bombings of the refugee camp of Jenin and Nablus and the attack on the Church of the Nativity are criminal acts and pose a clear threat to international peace and security. They require the Council's immediate action under Chapter VII of the Charter in order to force Israel to implement Security Council resolutions immediately and fully, to end its aggression against the Palestinian people and against their rights, land and property, and to provide the Palestinian people with international protection.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): The situation in the Middle East, unfortunately, shows no sign of improvement. It is indeed a matter of concern to all of us that, despite repeated calls by the Council through its successive resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), the Israeli military operations in the Palestinian cities continue unabated. Numerous Palestinian towns and cities are suffering Israeli military occupation while civilian casualties are continuing to mount. This is blatant defiance of this world body and a challenge to its legal and moral authority.

If this trend continues, the Charter and the United Nations itself will lose their relevance as guarantors of international peace and security. We are dismayed that Israel has also not responded to President Bush's call for the cessation of its operations in Palestinian-controlled areas and the withdrawal from cities that it recently re-occupied. Let us hope that the visit of United States Secretary of State Colin Powell will produce some tangible results.

Enforceability of Security Council decisions cannot be allowed to be held hostage to the whims of the violators of its resolutions. It may perhaps be necessary now to move under Chapter VII.

Pakistan opposes violence of all sorts and on all scales. We urge its cessation. We also believe that the immediate stationing of international monitors in the region may be necessary not only to ensure the implementation of an effective ceasefire, but also to secure an immediate end to the spiralling cycle of violence and the protection of civilians, who have been the main and innocent victims of the violence in recent weeks and months.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Cuba. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Requeijo Gual (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for having convened this open meeting of the Security Council in response to the growing call of the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States, who are concerned about the continuation and the deepening of the crisis in the Middle East.

Unfortunately, the situation that once again brings us together today has not improved. To the contrary, it has worsened despite the appeals made by resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) and the trip of new envoys to the area.

The Israeli Government's disregard for everything we have discussed here over recent days fills us with indignation. Not even the little that is recorded in resolutions, which are diligently prepared to maintain so-called balance, is respected or taken into account.

The massacres continue. Repression continues. Threats to the physical integrity and the dignity of the President of the Palestinian National Authority, Yasser Arafat, continue. Arbitrary detentions, mistreatment and humiliation continue. Attacks against temples of different creeds continue. The tanks of the Israeli army continue to destroy houses, offices and the headquarters of the Palestinian National Authority in Ramallah and other cities in the West Bank.

The images of hundreds of children and young people with their hands bound, their eyes blindfolded and their heads hooded being taken to detention camps burst onto our television screens, despite the ferocious censure and manipulation of what is happening there. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian citizens continue to be surrounded by tanks while they are brutally attacked from state-of-the-art helicopter gunships or military equipment. And the Israelis still think that this is how the determination of an entire people will yield, a people who aspire only to living in peace in their own free and independent State.

We are going to speak very clearly and frankly. The credibility of the Security Council is on tenterhooks. If the situation continues like this, the Security Council must adopt broad and credible measures and must assume the authority and responsibilities assigned to it by the Charter of the United Nations.

How long is the Government of Israel going to mock Council resolutions and the calls and demands of the overwhelming majority of the international community? How long is it going to play unscrupulously with the lives of millions of human beings? If this situation continues to deteriorate, will we have to come here one day to make speeches condemning the use of weapons of mass destruction against concentrations of Palestinian people or against Arab neighbouring countries?

Of course, this disregard for what we do in this forum on behalf of the overwhelming majority of Member States is based on the absolute certainty and confidence provided by the indecent umbrella of the use or the threat of the use of the veto by one permanent member. That member uses it undemocratically every time something is supposedly done — even if just the touch of a rose petal — that might affect the Israeli regime: that country to which some attach the label of democracy, despite so many abuses that are committed in the illegally occupied Arab territories and despite its flagrant and ongoing failure to comply with many General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, whose paper has yellowed in archives where they await implementation.

Israel's disregard for what we do will persist while the alleged mediators, who may be effective in negotiations, continue to maintain deceitful and unbalanced stands when they speak with the conflicting parties. It is impossible to accept that somebody may be an honest and credible mediator while being both judge and party, when he or she gives unlimited support to all the atrocities committed or supports militarily, politically and economically, with enormous subsidies estimated to be around $5 billion annually, a military and political machine trained and ready to kill and plunder with hatred and brutality, using the alleged pretext of defending its nation and ensuring its national security. Unfortunately, timid voices can still be heard in the Council appealing to the parties as if they were fighting on an equal footing. How much longer will this despicable blindness continue?

I call on the members of the Security Council and of the United Nations as a whole: let us do away with hypocrisy and rhetoric; let us leave diplomatic formalities on one side. These massacres must be brought to an end. The Government of Israel must be compelled to abide by the provisions of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and to respect minimum rules of coexistence and behaviour among States. Specific and effective action — not half-measures — must be taken. This should include the immediate dispatch of an impartial international force — I stress the word "impartial" — mandated by the Security Council to ensure compliance with a ceasefire and to demand the effective withdrawal of the Israeli army from the Palestinian cities. State terrorism must be brought to an end. All — not just some — of the human rights of the Palestinian people must be respected, including their most precious right, the right of which they are deprived every day: the right to life.

Cuba will not cease to denounce, strongly and loudly, the crimes committed against Arab peoples,

especially against the Palestinian people. Cuba will not cease to denounce the daily manipulation and distortion of the situation. Cuba will continue to denounce the double standards used in this Council — a Council that is rendered impotent by the threat or the use of the veto.

One day soon, justice will be done, and a just and lasting peace will be achieved in the Middle East region for the benefit of all the peoples who live there. Meanwhile, we will continue to denounce and condemn the failure to act and the impunity with which resolutions, the principles of the Charter, international law and international humanitarian law are violated. We will also speak, fearlessly and frankly, with right on our side, with total independence and with faith that justice will overcome iniquity.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express my gratitude and appreciation to you, Mr. President, for having implemented the first provision of rule 48 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council for the second time in one week, thereby enabling the membership of the United Nations, on whose behalf the Council speaks, to be present in the Council Chamber while the Council carries out its work before the eyes of the world, rather than behind closed doors, as if it were scheming.

We are not, of course, surprised that you, Mr. President, should have done so. Not only are you greatly experienced, but you are, without doubt, the unrivalled dean of the Council and the representative who is most knowledgeable with regard to the rules, whether written or unwritten. We learned about the unwritten rules only after the end of the previous international balance of power.

I should like first of all to make one observation before moving on to the heart of the matter — although this observation, too, goes to the heart of the matter. The fact that the Council is considering this issue under an agenda item that refers to the "Middle East" prompts me to note that there is no such geographical region. There is a region of the Far East and one of the Near East, but there is no region called the "Middle East". If we refer to the region in question as the "Middle East", then where is the Near East? I hope someone can enlighten me on that question. The truth is that it was an invention, created in London with the purpose of avoiding the need to use the word "Palestine". "Palestine" was replaced with "Middle East" — and these are the unfortunate consequences.

What I regret most of all is that the Arabs themselves use that term very frequently; they have been taken in by the trick. There is no region called the Middle East, whether considered from a historical or a geographical perspective. If anyone has proof of the existence of such a region, I would be willing to listen. Even political administrations and the foreign ministries of certain States still refer to the region as the "Near East". Some companies refer to the Near East, banks refer to the region as the "Near East". The Middle East does not exist; the only purpose of inventing such an expression was to replace the word "Palestine".

The question is that of Palestine, not of the Middle East. This question has to do with the occupation of Palestinian territory, the expulsion of its people and their replacement by foreigners. This is a problem of occupation, and it cannot be resolved unless we look at it as such. Any other solution will not be permanent and will never lead to peace. Even if such a solution did achieve peace temporarily, it would not be a permanent peace. That is a historical fact.

What has taken place in the past, and what is taking place now, will not be prevented by mediation, appeals or resolutions. It will require serious action by the Security Council — action that lives up to its name. Given the current international balance of power, the Council has become incapable of facing up to such problems.

The Palestinians are told that they must put a stop to the terror; we can only respond by saying that that demand must be addressed to the greatest terrorist organization in the world: the Israeli army. The Palestinians are defending themselves, their honour, their territories and their property; they are defending their right to live on their own territory. Palestinians have not come from all over the world to carry out terrorist acts on their own territory, where they themselves live. The occupier has come to kill them, to destroy their homes and to besiege them, cutting off power, water and food.

Yet there are some within and outside this Chamber who say that Mr. Arafat must make a greater effort. What is left for Mr. Arafat to do? He lacks electricity, water, food and medicine. He can no longer do anything. Neither Arafat, nor anyone else — not even prophets or angels, were they to appear again in Palestine — can prevent someone from avenging the murder of his father, his brother, his son, his mother, or his grandparent, or the destruction of his home.

Moreover, Arafat's leadership is not in question or the subject of any resolution. His leadership is historic, to which he was elected. Did anyone ever question the legitimacy of General De Gaulle when he was fighting the occupation of France? Of course not, because the rest of the free French Resistance chose him to assume that role. When he entered Paris, he and the other Resistance fighters were received as heroes. Did anyone question the legitimacy of George Washington when he acted against the colonialists to liberate the United States of America? Of course not.

The same reasoning applies to Arafat's leadership. His legitimacy is rooted in history; it is the legitimacy of one who is liberating his country, exactly as General De Gaulle and George Washington liberated their countries from occupiers. Arafat, dead or alive, will remain a hero in history. No one but President Arafat and the Palestinian people has the right to do anything about that. Although he led the Palestinian revolution and established the liberation forces in Palestine, today he is being called upon to make a greater effort.

Now I should like to make another very important point. Who in the region is calling for peace, and who is calling for war? The Arabs are calling for peace; the Muslims are the advocates of peace. To us, peace is one of the attributes of God and one of his beautiful names. That is why, when someone names a child Abdul-Salam, it means "Servant of God, peace". A Muslim does not attack others by words or actions; he harms no one by words or actions. That is the meaning of Islam. I refer the Council to all the Arab efforts and initiatives to achieve peace. Likewise, I refer the Council to those who have undermined those peace initiatives. I will not state my country's opinion, but I will read from an article by Uri Avneri, an Israeli journalist, that appeared in the 13 March issue of *Muslim International*, volume 52. I have an English version of the article, and I will ask the Secretariat to distribute it to the Council.

In the article, entitled "How Can the Saudi Initiative be Undermined or Exploded?", Mr. Avneri goes back through history and finds that Israel has always destroyed peace initiatives in three stages. The first stage is denial. Secondly, once the effort has been denied, it is distorted; and thirdly, the initiative is liquidated. That is how Sharon's Government is dealing with the current initiative; it is the way that successive Israeli Governments have undermined all peace efforts for the past 53 years.

We should not doubt for a moment that all Israeli Governments have been against peace. They have all worked against it. Their first stage, denial, is designed to diminish the importance of whatever initiative has been introduced. Israel will say that the initiative brings nothing new to the table — that it is only a political trick to gain tactical advantage. If the initiative has been made by an Arab, the Arab will be accused of intending it only for the consumption of the international community, not for that of his own people. In a nutshell, such a peace initiative means that the Arab in question is not to be taken seriously.

In using this strategy, Israel will concentrate on one particular word, as we will show. Before the October war of 1973, President Sadat made a comprehensive peace offer, but Golda Meir rejected it immediately, because her experts discovered that Mr. Sadat had used the Arabic word for "peace" and not the word for "conciliation". The price of that word claimed the lives of thousands of Egyptian soldiers.

The same strategy is being applied to the Saudi initiative. First of all, it has been said that Crown Prince Abdullah spoke of that initiative with a United States journalist but did not announce it to his own people. When it was discovered that the Saudi and British press had widely reported the initiative, a new pretext was given: that the Saudis had submitted the offer because they were no longer popular in the United States in the light of angry American reaction to the events of 11 September. Consequently, and I am quoting Uri Avneri, "Crown Prince Abdullah was no longer a true Zionist".

Then the Israelis will move to the second phase to deftly circumvent the initiative. They will say that they do not refuse the initiative, but welcome the positive spirit in which it was offered, and then throw the ball outside their court. It would then seem logical for them to ask for a clarification of the offer. When there is a

difference between two peoples, they should meet to discuss the matter and put an end to their differences.

This sounds very logical, but they are also trying to destroy the offer at the same time. Every Arab offer or initiative is based on the restoration of the territories in return for the normalization of relations, but several Arab offers have fallen into the same trap. Mr. Ben-Gurion asked to meet with President Muhammad Najib of Egypt and several Israeli ministers sought to meet with President Hafez Assad. Only President Sadat was clever enough to go to Jerusalem on his own initiative.

When the Security Council adopted resolution 242 (1967), it was rejected by the Israeli Government and accepted only when acceptance could no longer be avoided. The Israeli interpretation focused on the definite article "the", which did not appear in the English text calling for withdrawal from "occupied territories", not "the occupied territories", unlike the French text, which contained the definite article. Unfortunately, the Russian language does not have articles, definite or indefinite. The idea is to break the spirit of the Arabs little by little, giving various interpretations to any Arab offer and making conditions unacceptable to the other party so that the offer dies a slow death. That is what happened in Lausanne and to most peace initiatives emanating from Europe and America.

Following the first and second phases, the initiative is killed by force of arms, as Sharon did in the occupied Palestinian territories immediately after the Arab summit in order to liquidate the offer entirely. These are not my words, but those of Uri Avneri, a Jewish Israeli author. The Israeli Government usually employs two lethal weapons in its arsenal: the United States Congress and the American press. These, too, are the words of Uri Avneri, not mine. For instance, United States Secretary of State William Rogers suggested a peace plan involving Israel's withdrawal to the lines of 1967, but Israel brought out its weapons to quash the Rogers plan. Mr. Kissinger made his own attempt, which was also aborted.

Again citing Uri Avneri, I ask: Who are those calling for peace and who are those against it? We need only read Mr. James Baker's book *The Politics of Diplomacy* to learn how the occupation forces in Palestine made life miserable for the Administration in Washington. Another such book is entitled *They Dare to Speak Out*. Those who favour peace would not impose the conditions cited yesterday in *Al-Ahram*, a moderate Egyptian newspaper, in which Mr. Sharon was quoted as saying that Israel would not end its operations until resistance was crushed, that the refugees will not be allowed to return and that the borders of 1967 will not be restored. What sort of peace is it if the resistance is crushed and the refugees cannot return? If we cannot restore the 1967 borders, on what basis can negotiations be held? On what basis can agreement be reached?

I should like to assure the Council that the Arabs are the ones calling for peace. No one should believe for one moment that the occupation forces in Palestine desire or seek peace. They will destroy any peace offer, as Uri Avneri has claimed. It is not true that there is a democratic Government in Israel. It is a Government passed down from one general to another. It is a Government of generals and military commanders with experience in only one arena — war, which they wage tirelessly.

Now we come to the Security Council. What is the role of the Security Council if it is indeed to be considered a council for international security? Two days ago, a demonstration was held in Rabat, Morocco, in which the press reported 3 million people to have participated. One female participant in that massive demonstration was quoted on the Al-Jazeera network as shouting:

> "Down with international resolutions! Down with international instruments! Down with the Security Council!"

What could bring a Moroccan woman to say such a thing? It was her understanding that the Council is very quick to adopt resolutions under Chapter VII when Muslims and Arabs are involved, but that resolutions under Chapters VI and VII are never adopted when Israel is involved. Indeed, the resolution recently adopted is vacuous, mere words. A plain statement of the President of the Security Council would have been enough, as some have claimed. We know the reason for this. Council members of the free world defend liberty, but the Council is not even free to adopt its own resolutions. It is subcontracted for the occupation of Palestine. Cuba and Libya are truly free because we express our real opinions here. We are the true free people; we are the independent ones.

One million people also participated in a demonstration in Yemen. Millions from the universities

in Cairo, Egypt, have also demonstrated. The artists of Egypt have collaborated on a work of art that has taken the Arab streets back to the early 1960s. Demonstrations have erupted in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Jordan, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. If anything positive has come from this horrible invasion, it is that the Arab streets and cities have recovered their zeal and dignity. Sooner or later, in days, months or years, what is happening in Palestine will have repercussions on the Arab positions. I say this now and the truth of my words will emerge in the future.

The Security Council should attempt to salvage some of its credibility — I do not say all its credibility, as that would be difficult given the balance of power in the world today. How can Chapter VII be applied against Libya, the Sudan, Iraq, Iran and other countries and not against those who are killing, destroying homes and conducting assassinations on the streets of Palestine with impunity? The events in East Timor caught the Council's immediate attention. Is it not interested in what is happening in Palestine? Is the Council not moved by the killing of children; the embargo of food assistance and medicine; attacks by air, tanks and artillery; the arrest of people in their own homes? Where are human rights? Are the Palestinians and Arabs not human and therefore without rights? The Council stands accused. Can it claim innocence? It is no longer an international Security Council. How much longer will the Council, which is responsible for international peace and security, remain silent and fail to deal with this issue as a matter of occupation? Applying the model of South Africa would be the solution and would allow this Council to recover its credibility and dignity, part of it at least.

We care about the United Nations. We want to strengthen and support the United Nations and the Security Council. We call on the Council to play its role and assume the responsibility conferred on it by the Charter.

We agree with what has been said by Cuba concerning double standards. This is true. My country was the first in the second half of the twentieth century to call for abolishing the right of veto. The veto is not a right; it is a privilege. And that is what we have called it. If the Council does not act quickly, I think that it will regret it.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Turkey. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Cengizer (Turkey): For the third time in a row, Turkey has aligned itself with the statements made on behalf of the European Union by the distinguished representative of Spain. These three statements constitute a righteous stance while reflecting a deeply worried state of mind. Indeed, the developments we have seen within the last 48 hours have only confirmed the seriousness of the situation. As a matter of fact, Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) have all spoken clearly on the ways of bringing the tragic situation in the Middle East to an end.

We are deeply disturbed at seeing the failure of Israel to implement these resolutions. Even after having heard the sentiments of the members of the Security Council and others who spoke yesterday, the Israeli Government is not taking the necessary action, while very disturbing news of what has taken place in Jenin and other refugee camps continues to reach the international community. The tanks should turn back from all Palestinian cities now.

The economic and social life of the Palestinians has been violently upset. We are very much concerned with the resultant humanitarian situation. We have to repeat that the human rights of the Palestinian people are being violated. The sight of blood in Palestinian cities and the refugee camps is unbearable. Even the needs of the sick and injured cannot be met as they wait for a healing hand. Such restrictions should be lifted.

That Chairman Arafat is robbed of his legitimate capacities worsens the plight of the Palestinian people. Under the circumstances, the Israeli action seems to have been exactly what the radical elements in the region have been looking for. We must not let them succeed. This is another reason why we cannot accept the ferocity of the Israeli action: with its radicalism, it breeds the same.

In this Chamber, Turkey has urged the international community, and in particular the United States, to intervene at the earliest possible moment. It

goes without saying that we continue to hope for Secretary of State Colin Powell's success in addressing the urgent need of a credible and constructive intervention that will lead the parties out of this quagmire. But the parties should also be led beyond that urgent need.

What has happened, and what is right now happening, must not happen again. Simply, the terrain must be cleared for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution in the Middle East where all the parties can live side by side and in assured security.

They know how to transcend this sterile fight. They should not waste this chance. They must be more forthcoming than they have been on issues that remain vital concerns for the other side. After all, the problem is not that each side is baffled as to what the other side wants. It is not a lack of knowledge about the legitimate concerns of the other side.

They must do more than pay lip service to peace. We have seen what paying lip service does. It enflames mistrust. It leads to outright conflict. It silences those who speak for peace. It puts those yet to be born under perennial danger.

The overarching objective remains the same. Soon, the Israelis and the Palestinians must start living side by side in their own respective States, in peace and security, within their internationally recognized borders. There must be no return to this despicable state of affairs in the region.

For this, Israel should address the heightened grievances of the Palestinian people and choose to become a more forthcoming partner of the Palestinians in fulfilling and attaining their legitimate rights.

The Palestinian side must respond positively and fully to the calls for a ceasefire. This it should do credibly, and show its determination to fight resolutely with terrorist elements. Terrorism cannot be glorified.

Security is the absolute right of Israel. Those who deny this right are the enemies of both the Israelis and the Palestinians, because they play for and bid for lasting enmity between these two peoples. They think they will gain when these two lose. They are radicals of every sort and creed.

Attacks from the Lebanese territories on Israel that violate the Blue Line are aimed at widening the area of conflict, and they are in breach of the relevant Security Council resolutions as well. This cowardly tactic cannot be allowed to function. The "quartet", as well as other facilitators, should remain seized of the matter, especially at a time when the ideas for some form of international presence are moving to the forefront of the agenda.

Clearly, the situation is dangerous and we need more than a thaw. We need efforts that bring the future of the region as a whole into perspective.

Turkey is ready to contribute to all efforts geared to working to the benefit of a brighter, more promising future in the region, and will continue to strive for this noble end.

Before I conclude, let me say this. We pray for those innocent souls from both sides that have lost their lives.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, I thank you for having convened another public meeting on the grave situation in the Palestinian territories.

Israel continues with its ruthless military campaign throughout the West Bank. By so doing it reveals once again its unlawful and aggressive nature, exposing it to the entire world. As has always been its practice, it is in flagrant breach of two more resolutions of the Security Council, which represents the will of the international community. Moreover, it defies international public opinion, which has widely expressed outrage at the atrocities committed recently by heavily armed Israeli troops against defenceless civilians.

Those Israelis who have orchestrated the ongoing carnage against the Palestinians must understand that they are engaged in a disgraceful war. They are engaging a people who have no tanks, no helicopters, no F-16s, not even anti-tank rockets. Those who arm to the teeth and unleash an army against civilians are war criminals, and those who have armed and equipped such a reckless army cannot shun responsibility. We believe that the international community should begin to take necessary steps with a view to bringing war criminals to justice. The International Criminal Court,

which is to take effect soon, is an appropriate mechanism to consider taking up this issue.

The policy of the Israeli regime has always consisted of driving the Palestinian people into desperation and hopelessness. Along this line, the Israelis never meant to abide by the terms of the agreements they signed with the Palestinians. While they have ostensibly committed themselves to the so-called land for peace agreement, they have not stopped building Jewish settlements in the West Bank and in Gaza since 1993. The significant increase in the population and in lands under unlawful Jewish settlement in those areas over the past nine years, including 34 new Jewish settlements last year, attests to the fact that the Israelis have never been serious about the agreements they signed with the Palestinians. In other words, the Israeli regime has continued to colonize the territory from which they had ostensibly negotiated to withdraw.

Similarly, the Israeli regime, after years of foot-dragging, has now come to drop the empty pretence of seeking peace. The Israeli army is out to wipe out all Palestinian institutions and destroy the nine-year-old process. This especially serves the ideological goal of the faction currently in power in Israel. Moreover, by invading the Palestinian areas and restoring ruthless tactics the Israelis create more hate, thereby setting the stage for more Palestinian resistance and more violence.

The aggressive Israeli policy applies to Lebanon as well. The Lebanese Government has brought to the attention of the Secretary-General the almost daily violations of its border by Israeli armed forces over the past two years. Israeli aircraft breaking the sound barrier over Lebanese towns and villages is just one routine example of such cross-border violations, which amount to bullying tactics, threatening adjacent countries. Both regional Governments concerned stress that resolution 425 (1978) has not been implemented in full. It is not necessary to recall that the partial Israeli pullout from southern Lebanon took place only after years of heroic resistance by the Lebanese people. I hereby reject the allegations by the Israeli representative in this Council and assert that my Government has nothing to do with the situation along the Blue Line.

Not only does the Israeli army continue with the massacre of the Palestinians, but in the process it also flouts all provisions of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, and particularly those that ban indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force, as well as humiliating treatment of civilians and attacks on holy places. Under such circumstances not only do the Israelis show contempt for resolution 1402 (2002) ten days after its adoption, and resolution 1403 (2002), but there are also indications that they plan to continue their invasion for many weeks, if not months, to come.

We believe the Security Council should not stand idly by and let its authority erode. It is time for the Council to act more resolutely and demand, under Chapter VII of the Charter, compliance with its resolutions, and the establishment of an international force to provide basic protection for the defenceless Palestinian citizens.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation wishes to thank you, Mr. President, and members of the Council, for convening this urgent meeting to consider the grave situation in Palestine, on which my delegation feels compelled to address the Council once again.

The situation in the occupied Palestinian territories has deteriorated further since the Council last met. The onslaught by Israel's military machine against the Palestinian people and their leadership continues relentlessly, leaving death and destruction in its wake. Ambassador Al-Kidwa of Palestine yesterday informed the Council of the latest developments, many of which have been corroborated by media reports. In short, the situation is extremely critical and demands immediate action by this Council.

The Council adopted resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) in an effort to calm the explosive situation. But much to the regret of my delegation — and, I am sure, of the members of the Council as well — Israel has chosen to ignore them. In defiance of the repeated calls of the Council, Israel presses on with its ruthless invasion of Palestinian territories. It ignores even the repeated calls of its friends, including the United States, to desist from further military action and to withdraw its troops immediately from Palestinian towns and cities that it had occupied.

Reports now indicate that there appears to be a partial withdrawal from two Palestinian areas, Tulkarm and Qalqiliya, but these may well be temporary, tactical moves to ease the pressure from the Council and the international community. These partial withdrawals are not acceptable. The Council must make it plain to Israel that it expects immediate and full withdrawal. Withdrawal should not be contingent on what is operationally expedient for the Israeli army. It is a legal requirement imposed by the Council on a Member State of the Organization and must be heeded.

It is therefore incumbent on the Council to exert its authority fully and effectively and to demand that Israel comply forthwith with resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). Should Israel continue to ignore the request of the Council, the Council should seriously consider taking appropriate punitive measures against it, as provided for in the Charter.

The Islamic Foreign Ministers, in their meeting in Kuala Lumpur, called for sanctions against Israel. Any other State daring to defy the Council would have been severely dealt with. That is the only recourse left to the Council to bring Israel to its senses and to get it to abandon its military option for one of negotiation, in the interest of a lasting peace in the area. For the sake of the people of Palestine, and for its own sake, the Council must act promptly and decisively; it does not have the luxury of time. Appeals that fall on deaf ears will not enhance the authority of the Council. My delegation entirely agrees that what is needed now is not more statements or resolutions but concrete action by the Council to back up its resolutions. Israel must be told that the Council means business and that it expects to see the immediate and full withdrawal of Israeli troops from the areas it has occupied in recent weeks. It must be told to begin the peace process in earnest.

My delegation looks forward to the efforts by the United States Secretary of State Colin Powell. We hope he will meet with all the principal actors, not the least of whom is President Arafat. President Arafat is the acknowledged and elected leader of the Palestinian people. He should be treated with the dignity and respect that his office deserves. He should not be demonized and shunned, but should be taken seriously as an important, indeed indispensable, interlocutor in the peace process. We should all remember that it was not President Arafat who precipitated this 18-month-long crisis, but Mr. Sharon, with his deliberately provocative visit to the Al-Aqsa compound. It is ironic indeed that Mr. Arafat, who has made so many efforts in the search for peace since Madrid and Oslo, is the one being demonized and sidelined, when we all know that this second intifada was precipitated by that provocative visit by Mr. Sharon.

Israel's intransigence in the face of the direct requests of the Council is a direct challenge to the authority of the Council. It can be ignored only at the expense of the Council's credibility, which is now at stake. Israel's continued defiance would constitute a rude rebuff and a humiliation of the Council, which the international community cannot accept. The impassioned speeches made in the Council on this issue attest to this. They must move the Council to action.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Jordan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your concern and your quick response to the request to convene this emergency meeting to consider the continuing crisis and the deteriorating situation in our region.

The Israeli escalation, seen in the acts of aggression committed by the occupying Power against the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority, particularly in the Jenin and Nablus camps, represents a criminal act of aggression — and an ugly one, indeed. We strongly condemn this act of aggression and remind the Israeli Government that its actions in the occupied Palestinian territories are a stark violation of international humanitarian law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. That fact has already been mentioned by the Council.

The time has come for the Israeli Government to realize that the military option is not a solution to any crisis. Escalation and violence breed further escalation and violence and lead to further broadening of the gap between the Israeli and Palestinian sides. Therefore, Jordan stresses that a political solution is the only way to overcome the crisis.

We call on the Israeli Government to implement Security Council resolution 1402 (2002) and immediately to withdraw all its forces from the territories and cities it has reoccupied. We also call on

the Israeli Government to lift the siege imposed on the Palestinian people and leadership and to begin implementation of the Tenet plan and the Mitchell recommendations in preparation for the resumption of final status negotiations from the point at which they were left off.

My delegation once again calls on the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities under the Charter by forcing Israel to implement promptly the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 1402 (2002). We also call on the Council to work towards sending an international force to protect the Palestinian people.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of India. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gopinathan (India): We thank your delegation, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to discuss the ever-worsening situation in the occupied territories, which is a growing cause of acute concern and deep distress for all of us. Since 29 March, we have made two statements on this agenda item, setting out our position before the Council. I shall therefore be brief.

The statement recently made by Peter Hansen, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which underlines the grievous situation of civilians in the Balata and Jenin refugee camps, is indeed extremely distressing and speaks for itself. Israel's military actions against innocent civilians will in no way serve its best interests or provide the security it seeks for its people. In fact, the consequences will be to the contrary. There can be no justification for directing violence at innocent civilians.

Resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), recently adopted by the Security Council, provide a road map for the restoration of normalcy. We once again call upon both parties to implement those resolutions. Israel must withdraw its forces from the occupied territories immediately, and there should be a ceasefire followed by the resumption of negotiations. That is the clearly expressed and uniform sentiment of the international community.

We understand that the Security Council met with the Permanent Representative of Israel and the Permanent Observer of Palestine yesterday. We hope that this interaction will contribute to the immediate implementation of the Council's resolutions and will pave the way for the resumption of dialogue and negotiations, so that the people of Israel and the people of Palestine can live side by side within secure and recognized borders, also paving the way for lasting peace in the region.

In our earlier statements, we emphasized that President Arafat, who enjoys wide support and respect, is the symbol of Palestinian nationhood. His well-being and safety are also of paramount concern to the international community. We reiterate that all restrictions placed on him should be lifted forthwith to enable him to play his rightful role.

Another cause of serious concern is the continued violations of the Blue Line. These risk further exacerbating the situation in the region. They also pose a threat to United Nations peacekeepers. We urge that the violations be brought to an end immediately and that the sanctity of the Blue Line be respected.

The situation in the Middle East is frighteningly grave. On 7 April, the Council called on the parties to cooperate fully and in good faith with ministers and Special Envoys of the "quartet" and with the Secretary-General, especially in the context of the forthcoming visit of the United States Secretary of State to the region. We urge the Security Council to work assiduously with the parties concerned to bring to an immediate end to the violence that has engulfed the region and which could have very far-reaching consequences. We convey to the Council our full support in its endeavours.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Yemen. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Ashtal (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): Just a few days ago my delegation and many other delegations called on the Council to assume its responsibility, to deter Israeli aggression against Palestine and to put an end to the attacks by the bloodthirsty Israeli military apparatus on the defenceless Palestinian people. The Council thus adopted resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). Both resolutions have practically been rejected by Israel and it has not implemented them. We have repeatedly warned of the seriousness of the delay in ending the

ongoing and escalating Israeli aggression at a time when it has been clear that some members of the Council have been prepared to accept Israel's deceitful claim that its military offensive is a war against terrorism.

It has become clear today to everyone of sound mind that these were false, deceitful claims. The Israeli forces are besieging entire Palestinian towns and villages. They are showering defenceless civilians with missiles and heavy artillery, without distinguishing between children, youth and the elderly. They are demolishing houses and the infrastructure in a barbaric way. They are preventing water, food and medicine from reaching the entire population and are impeding ambulances from reaching the injured. They are firing at media representatives who are attempting to convey an honest picture of what is happening there.

There is Israel, a country that claims to be peaceful and democratic: a country whose Prime Minister has the audacity to claim that he wants peace, even over the dead bodies of Palestinian children; that he wants security for Israel, even at the expense of the future fate of the Palestinians. We do not know what kind of peace the Israeli Government claims to seek while it continues its barbaric aggression, its destruction of the infrastructure in the Palestinian areas and of the institutions of the Palestinian Authority and its liquidation of the majority of the Palestinian leadership.

We might also wonder how, after all this, anyone can go back to peace negotiations, as Sharon claims is possible. Negotiations over what and with whom? It is clear that Israel has interpreted the Security Council's failure to implement resolution 1402 (2002), requesting it to put an immediate end to its aggression, as a lack of will and the inability to implement that resolution. The thuggery of the Israeli forces reflects that interpretation and confirms beyond any doubt that the Israeli Government does not give any weight to the Council and does not respect its resolutions. It seems to us that some members of the Council have forgotten that the policy of appeasement attempted by the British Government to further deter Nazi aggression against Central European countries before the Second World War actually failed to deter that aggression at its inception.

The Security Council is called upon today more than ever to immediately and firmly take concrete and effective measures to put an end to the massacres being carried out by the Israeli forces, which are killing scores of defenceless Palestinians daily. We call upon the Council, in addition to simply implementing its resolutions, to oblige Israel to respect the legal agreements reached with the representatives of the Palestinian people. It should abide by its legal and moral commitments in accordance with human rights agreements, particularly the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949. We also call for Chapter VII of the Charter to be invoked against Israel if it refuses to implement Security Council resolutions and if it persists in its behaviour. We also wish to request the dispatch of international peacekeeping forces to the Palestinian areas.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Mauritania. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ould Deddach (Mauritania) (*spoke in Arabic*): For the second time in less than a week we are meeting in unpleasant circumstances, except that I am given the opportunity for a second time to express my thanks to you, Mr. President, for your prompt response to the request of the Arab Group to hold this open meeting of the Security Council, which is devoted to dealing with the very serious and deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. Bearing in mind that deteriorating situation, this meeting is additional proof of the fact that resolutions of international legitimacy must be implemented, as embodied in the Security Council resolutions relating to the Palestinian question, in particular resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002).

It is indeed regrettable that the Security Council should be holding consecutive meetings in order to reaffirm and insist on the implementation of resolutions it has previously adopted.

Since there is a dire crisis threatening the Palestinian people, from a humanitarian point of view, the refusal to implement Security Council resolutions and the ensuing grave developments call for immediate intervention to protect the defenceless Palestinian people. This will be a test of the Council's credibility and will require it to assume its responsibility in accordance with the Charter of the Organization.

Compliance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949 should be among the Council's main priorities. It should demand that humanitarian services not be impeded and that they be able, unconditionally, to reach the Palestinian people.

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania wishes to express once again its full solidarity with the brotherly Palestinian people and with the symbol of their struggle, President Arafat. We call upon the Council to adopt measures that are in keeping with its responsibilities and with the needs of the situation, which brooks no further delay.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of the United Arab Emirates. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Shamsi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, to thank you wholeheartedly, Mr. President, for having responded so quickly to the request to convene this urgent meeting. We hope that the outcome of this meeting will meet the challenge posed by the worsening situation and the exceptional events taking place inside the occupied Palestinian territories.

This is the eighth meeting that has been convened by the Security Council on an emergency basis in less than two weeks. The Council has been meeting to consider the grave, deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. War crimes, massacres, genocide, arbitrary detention and wanton destruction are continuing at the hands of the Israeli army, whose forces are armed with the most dangerous weapons, including some that are internationally banned — weapons that are being used against the defenceless Palestinian population.

The Security Council has adopted resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), all of which call upon Israel to put an end to its acts of aggression against the Palestinians and to withdraw without delay from their territories, which it has recently reoccupied by force. Regrettably, however, the Israeli Government, in keeping with its position in recent decades, has blatantly ignored its legal commitments, including those set out in international instruments. It has also ignored other international appeals for it to put an end to its gross violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people — violations that run counter to all the principles of international humanitarian law, including those of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 on the protection of civilians and their property in time of war.

Television channels and international news agencies yesterday carried a statement by the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, in which he publicly declared his determination to continue his bloody and infamous invasion of Palestinian lands and cities, justifying his actions by saying that the objectives of the invasion have not yet been met.

Once again, as with similar provocative and dangerous statements, the Israeli leader, who is known for his extreme, racist fanaticism against Palestinians and Arabs, has revealed the true intentions of Israel, not only to erode the Oslo Accords to a point of no return, thus preventing further negotiations aimed at achieving peace, but to attempt to impose another fait accompli through its illegal occupation of Palestinian territories. This is being done in what is called the security buffer zone deep inside the Palestinian territories, along the Green Line. Israel is continuing to kill or force out a large number of Palestinians in an attempt to achieve its ideological, expansionist and historical ambitions at the expense of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians, which include the establishment of the State of Palestine, as supported by General Assembly resolution 181 (II) and Security Council resolution 1397 (2002).

The lax approach of the Security Council and its failure to speedily address the grave developments in the occupied Palestinian territories since the desecration by Sharon of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in 2000, or to heed the calls to dispatch an international force to protect Palestinian civilians have encouraged Israel to humiliate and isolate the Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat, after having completely destroyed his headquarters.

Israel has persisted in its acts of aggression — acts that have metastasized, with the irresponsible and arbitrary ravaging of Palestinian cities and camps. It has committed the most heinous crimes — crimes of rape, murder and mass detention — particularly in the refugee camps of Jenin and Nablus. The bodies of hundreds of dead civilians are still strewn in the roads because people have been unable to bury them.

We therefore call upon the Security Council, as the body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, to take the necessary measures under Chapter VII of the Charter. Such measures should guarantee compliance by the Israeli Government with resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), as well as the speedy and unconditional implementation of all its legal, moral and political commitments to the Palestinian people, as agreed upon in the peace agreements.

In this respect, we also call upon the Security Council, in particular some of the most powerful members of the Council, to abandon their policy of double standards. That policy has led Israel to believe that it is above international law and internationally binding resolutions. That policy has encouraged Israel to persist in its hostile actions against the Palestinians and to directly threaten the peace and security of all the peoples and countries of the region.

The United Arab Emirates welcomed the statements made recently by the President of the United States, George Bush. President Bush called upon Israel to withdraw from all the Palestinian territories it had reoccupied. He also called upon Israel to put an end to the settlements and the siege imposed on the territories. The United Arab Emirates considers those statements to be a positive step towards peace. We therefore urge the United States to carry those constructive steps further by bringing more actual pressure to bear on the Israeli Government through the Secretary of State, who is currently visiting the region.

Israel must be pressured to end its brutal war crimes and torture of the Palestinians. We must work for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all the Palestinian territories that were reoccupied. Israel must also lift the humiliating and unjust siege imposed on President Arafat and the towns, villages and camps that it invaded, using tanks, armoured vehicles and jet fighters.

We also call for the urgent dispatch of an international observer force to the Palestinian territories to protect the lives of Palestinians while guaranteeing safe access to those who provide relief supplies and to humanitarian and medical aid workers who need to reach the thousands of victims of the Israeli crimes.

In conclusion, we once again call upon the international community not to fall into the trap set by the Israeli Government's repeated attempts to compare what it is currently doing to the Palestinian people and cities with the actions of the United States in fighting international terrorism in the aftermath of the events of 11 September. We therefore affirm the need for the Council to distinguish between the terrorism pursued by the Israeli Government and the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to self-defence and to resist occupation until their territories have been liberated and an independent State has been established in independent Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law and the relevant decisions of international legitimacy. Only then will we be able to uphold our credibility in working together at the international level to fight terrorism.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Lebanon. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Diab (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): In resolution 1402 (2002), the Security Council requested Israel to withdraw its forces from the Palestinian towns and villages that it had reoccupied. It called on Israel to seek peace by returning to the negotiating table. The Israeli response to that resolution was to escalate its acts of aggression against the Palestinian people, causing further death and destruction among Palestinian civilians. Within less than a week, in view of the seriousness of that escalation and Israel's intransigence in refusing to implement resolution 1402 (2002), the Security Council adopted resolution 1403 (2002), calling on Israel to implement the Council's previous resolution without delay.

While Council members, the Secretary-General and the heads of the States concerned, including the United States president, understood that the phrase "without delay" meant that Israel should withdraw immediately from the Palestinian territories, Sharon had his own interpretation of the resolution. He announced that he would accelerate the invasion and ordered his forces to finish their operations in the territories in fulfilment of his objectives and in clear defiance of the resolution. The time has come for the Council to put an end to Israel's disregard for Council resolutions. It should force Israel to implement them.

The humanitarian tragedy of the Palestinian civilians is deepening. The aggression against the defenceless Palestinian people is escalating. Humanitarian organizations, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, medical and humanitarian personnel, ambulances, and the press are being prevented from reaching the Palestinians, in clear violation of all international norms and laws, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention. Despite Israel's media blackout on the massacres it has carried out against the Palestinian people, it has become clear that its actions in many Palestinian towns and villages, including Nablus and Jenin, are war crimes.

In commenting on some statements made yesterday, the delegation of Lebanon would like to put some facts before the Council, which are as follows.

First, the Security Council, in 1978, adopted resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) against Israel in view of its invasion of the territories of Lebanon, contradicting all international laws and norms, including the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Secondly, the Government of Lebanon has reaffirmed its respect for the Blue Line and has explicitly declared that it has no intention of escalating the conflict or opening a new front. Accordingly, Lebanese forces have detained some out-of-control elements responsible for certain incidents near the border, and have referred them to military courts for legal prosecution. In that context, Lebanon reserves its right to liberate its territories in the occupied Shebaa farms using all possible means.

Thirdly, Lebanon has made a formal apology and expressed its regrets at the highest level to the United Nations and the members of the Security Council for the tragic event in which four United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) personnel were involved in southern Lebanon. We have committed ourselves to do everything possible to prevent the recurrence of such an event, and have decided to refer all those responsible to Lebanese justice for legal prosecution. Lebanon values the role that UNIFIL has played in southern Lebanon and highly appreciates the sacrifices it has made since 1978. We value that role out of our concern for peace and security and for our innocent civilians, who are constantly threatened by Israeli forces, even after the occupation. We have resolved to value that role out of respect for the partnership we have worked so hard to develop with the United Nations peacekeeping force since 1978.

Lastly, the party that should be considered responsible for the current escalation of the conflict is Israel, which has, since May 2000, deliberately and repeatedly violated Lebanon's sovereignty on land, in the air and on the sea. Israel has even bombed some liberated villages in Lebanon, using 155-millimetre-calibre howitzer cannons.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Republic of Korea, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): First of all, let me thank you, Mr. President, for reconvening this open debate on the situation in the Middle East.

The Republic of Korea is deeply concerned about the continuing escalation of violence in the Middle East. We are particularly distressed by the humanitarian situation in the region, and we urge the parties concerned to respect international humanitarian law to ensure the protection of civilians as well as the safety of international humanitarian workers.

The Government of the Republic of Korea has firmly opposed any form of violence that jeopardizes efforts to achieve peace and stability in the region. We share the view of all other members of the international community that violence cannot be a solution to the current situation. It is only through political dialogue and negotiations that the two parties can achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East.

In that regard, my Government gives its unreserved support to Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), calling for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities. We also welcome the Tenet plan and the Mitchell report recommendations as an effective framework for bringing peace to the region. The Republic of Korea believes that those initiatives should be put into practice promptly.

In that context, we hope that the visit of United States Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region will lead to a ceasefire and meaningful negotiations. At the same time, we commend the ongoing efforts by the international community for peace, in particular those of the "quartet" of international envoys.

The Government of the Republic of Korea believes that the peace process between Israel and Palestine is of critical importance to the peace and stability of the region and to the world as a whole. The potential spread of the conflict to other areas is a matter of grave concern. In particular, we are greatly disturbed by the recent eruption of violence along the Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon.

We join the international community in calling upon both parties to take their differences to the negotiating table for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, in compliance with the Security Council's resolutions.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Nepal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): I would like to start by expressing my delegation's immense pleasure at seeing you, Sir, preside over the deliberations of the Security Council for the month of April. I wish you success and assure you of my delegation's full support in your work.

My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made in the Security Council on 3 April by Ambassador Kumalo of South Africa in his capacity as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Middle East has been boiling up in violence for the past several months. The violence has further escalated and the situation further deteriorated in the past week after the reoccupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip by the Israeli security forces. This cycle of violence has caused a colossal loss of precious lives, Israeli and Palestinian alike, and is about to destroy the very foundations on which a long-term and lasting peace could be erected in the region.

There is simply no moral basis to justify the killing of innocent people, regardless of who does it or how it is done. The use of force has not produced a durable peace in the Middle East. It never will. The relative calm after the Oslo process began did not lead to a comprehensive peace, either. We now know that a ceasefire and calm must be accompanied by a political process that should fulfil the Palestinian aspiration for a politically and economically viable State and the Israeli aspiration for security. Only this will bring a comprehensive peace to the Middle East.

Left to their own devices, Israel and Palestine do not appear to have the necessary political will to find a negotiated settlement to the crisis. The international community must come to their assistance. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) provide the basis for resolving the acute conflict in the Middle East and the landmark resolution 1397 (2002) envisions the end goals for both sides. But before we begin to focus on the long-term solution to the Middle East problem, Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) must be implemented and Israel must immediately withdraw from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Once that objective is achieved, both sides must come to the negotiating table to find a comprehensive solution without further delay. If necessary, the Security Council must take appropriate measures to implement those resolutions.

Evidently, the parties themselves will have to agree to find a comprehensive peace and stability in the region. The international community's constructive and active involvement, however, will be critical to achieving that goal. In this context, we welcome the determination of the United States Administration to fully engage itself in helping to resolve this painful crisis.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Nepal for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Thayeb (Indonesia): Since the Security Council held its open-ended debate just a few days ago, the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories has significantly worsened, despite the fact that the Council has recently adopted important resolutions. Can there be light at the end of the tunnel as we witness with deepening dismay the unfolding carnage wrought on the Palestinian people and their territories?

As mandated by the Charter, the Council's primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security. Therefore, it must remain steadfast by insisting on the full and swift implementation of its resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), respectively. The fact that these resolutions remain unimplemented is a cause of profound concern to my delegation as more and more innocent civilians continue to be killed and maimed each passing day, due

to the expanding military aggression of the occupying Power. Moreover, it is appalling and beyond comprehension that thousands of innocent civilians should be denied the most basic necessities of food and medical supplies as they and their leader, President Yasser Arafat, remain under siege.

Such intolerable action is unjustifiable and against international humanitarian law, basic human rights and the norms by which civilized nations live. It brings to the forefront the question of the accountability and credibility of the Council's actions regarding the less grievous circumstances of other questions on its agenda.

My delegation strongly believes that the Security Council must seize this opportunity and discharge its given mandate on the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine. This should entail, amongst other things, the urgent deployment of an international security force to protect the civilians as a matter of priority and to bring peace and normalcy to these war-torn territories.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Philippines. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Manalo (Philippines): It is my pleasure to see you, Sir, presiding over this emergency meeting of the Security Council to address urgently the continuing violence and deteriorating situation in the Middle East.

The gravity of the situation has prompted the Security Council recently to issue three resolutions: 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), calling for immediate implementation of 1402 (2002) without delay. We support those resolutions and urge their immediate and full implementation.

My delegation participates today not just to convey our deep concern over the escalating violence in the region, but also to demonstrate our commitment to the pursuit of a just and enduring peace. In this regard, my delegation and Government fully support all ongoing efforts towards this end, including the direct engagement of the United States. No military solution can resolve this crisis. Only a political solution can have any chance of success in overcoming it. We are also deeply concerned with the growing humanitarian emergency in the occupied territories.

The international community has declared and exhibited its readiness to assist in reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting peace and security in the region. Thus, my delegation welcomes the window of opportunity for sustained and lasting peace offered by the proposal for a third-party monitoring mechanism. Yesterday's debate clearly indicated the international community's support for such a mechanism. We believe that this proposal should be vigorously pursued.

The ingredients of peace are in place. The Mitchell and Tenet plans have been accepted by both sides, and resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) have set the stage for immediate action. The Arab League Summit made a significant contribution in forging a common position to promote peace in the region. It is an important contribution to the peace process, which my delegation fully welcomes.

We also hope that any forthcoming Security Council resolution on this matter will identify practical measures to effect the ceasefire and set the stage for a lasting and durable peace in the area.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of Israel has asked for the floor, and I now call on him.

Mr. Lancry (Israel): At this time, I would like to make some comments regarding certain statements that have been made so far. I would like to begin by responding to the irresponsible statement made yesterday by the Permanent Observer of Palestine, who referred to Israel's statement, at the outset of this debate, with a series of derogatory and quite frankly undiplomatic terms that have no place in a serious discussion of this nature.

I could not help but be reminded of the use by the Permanent Observer of Palestine of similarly irresponsible language in his letter of 9 January 2002 to the Secretary-General, contained in document S/2002/39, in response to Israel's interception of 50 tons of sophisticated and illegal weapons bound for the Palestinian territories. The Permanent Observer of Palestine called Israel's claims of official Palestinian responsibility for that shipment "absurd" and claimed that no reasonable and sane person could believe it. In the second paragraph, he writes — and I quote from the official text:

> "The Israeli story defies logic and any common sense. No sane person could imagine this quantity of weapons to be successfully smuggled into Gaza through the many serious barriers, including the Israeli naval siege, irrespective of any talks of floating devices and the like. Neither could any sane person imagine the possible use of weapons such as Katyusha rockets against Israel from a place such as Gaza, without catastrophic results. Furthermore, no sane person can imagine in the circumstances this sort of 'military cooperation' between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Palestinian Authority, which have both denied any involvement."

Yet we all know now that responsibility for the weapons about the *Karin A* ship rises to the highest echelons of the Palestinian Authority, even to the Chairman himself. Clearly, Israel's allegations at the time were not quite as absurd as the Permanent Observer of Palestine would have had us believe.

We are in a similar situation today. Israel has come into possession of a substantial quantity of documentary proof that support and financing for terrorist operations have been supplied by the Palestinian Authority and by Chairman Arafat himself. These are the facts. They are known to all. They cannot be ignored or dismissed by theatrical rhetoric.

I will be sending a letter in this regard to the Secretary-General shortly. I have no doubt that in the coming days, we will see that Israel's claims of official Palestinian complicity in the murder of innocent Israelis is not as "silly" or "stupid" or "absurd" as the Permanent Observer of Palestine now claims.

It is unfortunate, but it appears as if the duplicity for which Chairman Arafat is now so well known has pervaded much of the Palestinian Authority. Chairman Arafat's duplicity allows him to reach out in peace with one hand, while he incites violence and terror with the other. It allows him to appeal to the highest ideals of the international community, while he consorts with the lowest and most disreputable elements of the Palestinian terrorist campaign. It leads him to arrest terrorists one day and release them through his revolving door the next. It is precisely this duality — this revolving policy towards peace and terrorism — that must be resolved if Israel is able to believe that the Palestinian leadership intends to conduct negotiations in good faith and if we are to conclude a genuine and lasting agreement with our Palestinian neighbours and partners.

I turn now to statements made by other representatives, to which we are always extremely attentive. We were dismayed, however, by the excessively one-sided statement made yesterday by the representative of Mauritius, who turned a completely blind eye to the practices of Palestinian terrorists. In a seemingly Manichaean view, it appears that there is one party that is totally guilty and one that is totally innocent. Clearly, Mauritius does not find Palestinian suicide bombings that have claimed hundreds of innocent human lives since the beginning of the Oslo process to be very impressive. Nor did Mauritius think to assess this inhuman practice in terms of international humanitarian law.

We do believe, however, that statements of members of the Council which stipulated that the demand for Israeli withdrawal does not mean an acceptance of Palestinian suicide bombing were a far more accurate reflection of the situation in the region. As members will by now know, Israeli troops have withdrawn from the Palestinian cities of Tulkarm and Qalqiliya, while there is no indication of any Palestinian willingness to implement their obligations under resolution 1402 (2002) in a reciprocal fashion. Yet, some Member States still chose to present a one-dimensional reading of resolution 1402 (2002), feeling no compulsion, out of a basic sense of fairness, to call for a concomitant Palestinian implementation of Security Council resolutions.

I would also like to respond to allegations that the deaths incurred on the Palestinian side were mostly Palestinian civilians. I cannot help but wonder at the source of this information. Such a claim can be credibly made only if one considers armed Palestinians as civilians, a consideration that clearly runs counter to the provisions of international law. I reiterate that claims regarding large-scale Palestinian civilian casualties are completely unsubstantiated. The fact is that Israeli soldiers are under strict orders to avoid causing harm to civilians and to engage only against armed Palestinians.

I should also like to express my total rejection of remarks from speakers that have equated Israeli practices with some of the most reprehensible deeds of the Nazis. Such analogies are absolutely indefensible and offensive. Can anyone accept a parallel between

the genocide of 6 million Jews and the Israeli campaign against terror? Is this kind of repulsive analogy a part of legitimate debate in the Security Council? Even Israel's harshest critics, if they are honest and decent, do not level accusations of this type.

If there is any factor in the modern Middle East whose practices resemble such ideologies, who demonstrate a total disregard for humanity, who are obsessed with the murder of innocent men, women and children and who make no distinctions among the targets of their rage, it is the Palestinian suicide bombers. Among their victims have been survivors of the Holocaust, who escaped Hitler's campaign of mass murder, rebuilt their lives in the State of Israel and fell victim to the spiritual progeny of these ideologies.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Permanent Observer of Palestine has asked for the floor, and I now call on him.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine): Yesterday, after my final statement, the Israeli representative said,

> "I regret the tone and content of the statement just made by the Palestinian Observer. In view of the fact that the statement was well prepared, I particularly regret the use of terms such as "silly" and "stupid". I believe that we should conduct the business of this important body in a parliamentary manner. The terms he used are not in line with the parliamentary manner." (*S/PV.4510, p. 26*)

Since that time, several ambassadors have asked me outside this Chamber why I had described the Israeli representative as silly and stupid. Others asked why I described the Israeli statement as silly and stupid. Today, of course, we heard another statement from the Israeli representative, describing our statement as irresponsible and using words such as "derogatory", "no class", et cetera. Although relatively minor, this is just another perfect example of the way many Israeli officials are conducting their business. They try to catch something out of context, make a lie out of it and then wage their campaign. Most probably it will work.

What I said yesterday was the following:

> "A while ago, we listened to the statement made by the Israeli representative, which was indeed an absurd and unfortunate one. The statement basically amounted to an attack on President Yasser Arafat and contained silly, stupid and unsubstantiated allegations that cannot be believed." (ibid., *p. 25)*

So "silly" and "stupid" were not directed at the statement and were definitely not directed at any person. They were practically an understatement about silly, stupid, derogatory, hostile, unsubstantiated — and you can add dozens of other negative adjectives — allegations that have only one aim: to undermine the Palestinian Authority and, specifically, its President, and to contribute to the campaign against them.

The Israeli representative then proceeded today to speak about a letter we sent with regard to another unsubstantiated allegation on the smuggling of an arms shipment by ship. Let me repeat clearly here that the Palestinian Authority and President Yasser Arafat have no involvement whatsoever with that story. However, we noted the presence of a Palestinian captain; we also took note of the involvement of a very few Palestinian officials in this story. As such, we recognize that there absolutely is a certain degree of responsibility that needs to be carried out and that an investigation has to take place.

However, we remain convinced that the Israeli story makes no sense. We stand firmly behind what we said in our letter to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/39). No such shipment was possible. No sane person would have conceived such a thing. And no, Katyushas could not be used in Gaza. The proof of this is that after all the Israeli savagery that we have seen in the last 10 days, no weapons other than rifles were used against the invaders. That is further proof that everything said by the Israeli side on the Palestinian smuggling of weapons was just a lie.

The Israeli representative — by the way, I am using the term "Israeli representative" intentionally in response to the inability of the Israeli side to use the correct and proper designation when he refers to me, that is, the Permanent Observer of Palestine; his inability to utter the word "Palestine" is unfortunate — goes on and chooses to attack the Permanent Representative of Mauritius. I am not going to get into this, but, to tell you the truth, it is very difficult to resist the feeling that a choice was made to serve certain political purposes, that there is a member of the Security Council here and that maybe that member is playing a certain role. So why not try another round of

the usual intimidation against individuals. We hope such intimidation will not work. What was said by the Permanent Representative of Mauritius was no different from what was said by at least 30 other speakers. That is another indication of why he was chosen.

The Israeli representative then goes on and refers to the withdrawal from Qalqiliya and Tulkarm. Let me clarify that the so-called withdrawal from Qalqiliya and Tulkarm is taking place while the Israeli occupying forces continue to surround both cities, keeping a very solid and, indeed, hermetic closure on both. At the same time the Israeli military attack continues and escalates. Israeli occupying forces today reoccupied the town of Dura, near Al-Khalil. The Israeli occupying forces are escalating their attacks in Jenin and Nablus, probably leading to a new Sabra and Shatila in the refugee camps in Jenin.

In another glaring example of the same Israeli tactics, the Israeli representative accused many of us of committing a huge sin by daring to compare, on the one hand, what happened to the Jews in Europe, through the terrible Holocaust, to what has been said about what the Israelis have been doing, on the other hand. This, again, is not true. The Permanent Observer of Palestine did not say that what the Israelis are committing against the Palestinian people now is tantamount to the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews in Europe. What we said was clear, that what is happening now in the Palestinian cities, what is being committed by the Israeli army in those cities, has caused a situation which, yes, is tantamount to European cities under the occupation of Nazi German armies.

We stand by what we said; we believe that it is correct. But it is completely different from what was alleged by the Israeli representative. What the Israeli army has been doing against our people does not differ in many aspects from what the Nazi German armies did in many European cities and against their inhabitants.

This is a fact, a terrible fact, which I hope will be courageously faced by the Israeli people. Facing it is the first step towards correcting it, towards a different kind of behaviour, one which could, hopefully, lead to peaceful coexistence between the two sides.

The President *(spoke in Russian)*: I have no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 2.10 p.m.